

Distribution of Goods and Services

So, in any case, that theory that nobody accepted and justifiably so, I do not intend to start demolishing it all over again, since this has already been done many times by persons both sincere and qualified. And even if it were completely demolished, the hon. member and his group would still believe in it, just like the guy with the piece of wire around his foot.

An hon. Member: That is a good one.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): At any rate, governments have constantly, with more or less success, made an effort to settle the problem of the bad distribution of wealth in the country. This has been done with more or less sincerity, sometimes more or less competently, but all objectives have not been reached, far from it. However, to say that nothing was ever done in Canada for the poor, for the low income group, smacks of demagoguery. You have only to look at the record of our social legislation to see an effort has been made, in good faith always, in order to fill the basic needs of the population as a whole.

This has been done through social security legislation, whether it be the workmen's compensation acts at the provincial level, old age security pensions, family allowances, unemployment insurance benefits, aid to the needy, assistance to the blind, etc. All those legislations of a social character are meant to help the poor.

I agree this is not enough. We have tried to protect people against the risk of illness; hospital insurance has been established to allow people to get medical care; since then, more people go to hospital for treatment. Last year, medicare was established. Of course, the Ralliement Cr ditiste objected to it. In fact medicare is designed to allow people without the means to do so to call on doctors nonetheless. We believe that citizens have basic rights in that respect. People cannot say that we did not deal with that problem. The government did.

Of course, it is very easy to make jokes about homosexuality and abortion. However, there are values much greater than those upheld by our hon. friends. We have constantly been concerned by the problems of the people.

As for me, Mr. Speaker, I have been a member of this government for three years. I have devoted all my energy and whatever talent I have to try and understand the

[Mr. Marchand (Langelier).]

economic problems of the people and see whether a solution could be found.

First of all, I endeavoured to help the workers who had to face the drawbacks of technological developments. The government has substantially increased allowances in aid to workers. It has done away with discrimination. It has raised the mobility allowances. All in all, the manpower branch has been established to assist people facing difficulties.

I have taken over a new department and indeed my concern is to provide assistance for the underdeveloped and poor areas, and for the past year I have been having legislation drafted to that end.

● (4:10 p.m.)

Will miracles happen? I am sure that the problem will not be settled once and for all. However, I know that there will be less people in hardship conditions. How many? I do not know. I am not a magician like the people of the Ralliement cr ditiste. I did not find the philosophers' stone nor any magic formula, I have no direct communication with the Holy Ghost. I am trying simply within the economic, social and political structures which I know to help the people whom I represent. I think that I can help them more in this way than by simply making speeches.

Anyway, we will, through regional development, help the areas which are in an advanced state of poverty. The legislation will be tabled next week. The department is already created and we will try to have the richer provinces contribute a little more in order to help the poorer ones.

As all political parties in the world—except that inspired group that has found truth and is really in communication with the Holy Ghost—either from the left, the right or the centre, or saints as Gandhi or his successor, we believe that there is a limit in the distribution or the production of money and the failure is not in the total amount in existence but in the distribution of goods.

Mr. Speaker, this situation also exists in Canada and it is far more complex than has been suggested by the hon. member for T miscamingue. In fact, there is at the present time in Canada certain areas where inflationist pressures are felt and others where there is a deflation.

It is far from easy to find a policy which would eradicate inflation in some parts of the country without at the same time making